संचार मंत्री (श्री बेनी प्रसाद वर्मा): (क) और (ख) लोनी क्षेत्र में डाक वितरण व्यवस्था संतोषजनक है और पत्र, तार तथा मनीआर्डर सामान्यतया समय पर वितरित किए जाते हैं। तथापि, विभाग के नियंत्रण से बाहर विभिन्न कारणों जैसे डाक लाने-ले जाने वाले हवाई जहाजों/रेल गाड़ियों और बसों का रद्द हो जाना/विलम्ब से चलना, प्राकृतिक आपदाएं, वितरण स्टाफ की कमी, कारपोरेट मेल, ग्रीटिंग मेल आदि जैसी डाक की मात्रा में अचानक और आपवादिक वृद्धि की वजह से कभी-कभार विलम्ब हो जाता है।

(ग) उपलब्ध रिपोर्टों के अनुसार, लोनी डाकघर में डाकियों के अतिरिक्त पदों का औचित्य है।

(घ) नए पदों के सृजन पर रोक लगी हुई है।

Illegal Fudging by Private Cellular Operators

1557. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is aware that many private cellular operators are allegedly fudging their monthly statements on subscriber column, volume as reported in the Economic Times, dated 12th July, 1997; and

(b) if so, what strategy is being evolved by DoT to counter the unhealthy trend of overzealous cellular licensees of four Metros reporting artificially inflated subscriber levels?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Alleged inflation in subscriber volumes has been reported in the Economic Times dated the 12th July, 1997, however, no specific details have been given in the news item.

(b) Need to investigate into alleged inflation in subscriber volumes has not been felt so far. In any case, in the case of licences for metro cities, the licensee companies are required to pay licence fee directly proportional to the number of subscribers from 4th year onwards.

Implementation of Promises on Global Telecom Pact

1558. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that FICCI has expressed concern that nothing concrete has so far been achieved by Government in creating situation for implementation of the promised India made to the World Trade Organisation on "Global Telecom Pact and Information Technology Agreement"; as reported in Hindustan Times, dated the 15th July, 1997;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government have not so far accorded any priority in this telecom sector to fill up the vacant circle for basic services which are not filled even after there rounds of bidding; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken so far with regard to (a) and (b) above?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes, Sir. As per News Paper Reports.

(b) There are at present eight circles for which no valid bid exist. These circles are Kerala, West Bengal, UP (East), H.P., J&K, Assam, North East & Andaman Nicobar Islands.

(c) The Government will take decision in this regard after the present Letters of Intent are converted into Licences.

Mini-M A new portable statelite communication service

1559. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of Mini-M, the new portable satellite communication service; and

(b) whether connections are given to all applicants and if not, the reasons therefor?